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LEONARD TACHNER
A PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION
17961 SKY PARK CIRCLE
SUITE 38-E
IRVINE, CA 926146364

EXAMINER

LASTRA, DANIEL

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2162

DATE MAILED: 03/22/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/482,830

Applicant(s)

LOHSE, KURT H

Examiner

DANIEL LASTRA

Art Unit

2162

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____ 6) ☐ Other: ____

1. Claims 1-14 have been examined.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 1, 4-8 and 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Scroggie et al (U.S. 6,014,634).

As per claim 1, Scroggie et al teach:

A method for providing discount incentives to potential customers for making purchases from service or goods providers; the method comprising the steps of:

providing an Internet website for providers to register and to set their respective discount parameters for issuing discount coupons to potential customers (see column 4, lines 1-6) ;

permitting access to said website by said potential customers to register and search for registered providers from whom they wish to make purchases (see column 3, lines 10-50);

establishing customer purchasing parameters for a selected provider and indicating a match between discount parameters and purchasing parameters (see column 10) ; and

presenting a website display of a discount coupon corresponding to said matching parameters for printout by a registered customer for subsequent redemption at a provider's place of business (see column 10).

As per claim 4, Scroggie et al teach:

The method recited in claim 1 further comprising the step of establishing a data file of coupon generation for each said provider (see column 4, lines 1-6).

As per claim 5, Scroggie et al teach:

The method recited in claim 1 further comprising the step of including at least one verification number on each said discount coupon (see figure 11).

As per claim 6, Scroggie et al teach:

The method recited in claim 1 further comprising the step of displaying a search page at said website for permitting a postponed customer to search for a provider based upon selected criteria (see columns 3-4).

As per claim 7, Scroggie et al teach:

The method recited in claim 6 wherein said search criteria comprise at least one criterion taken from the group consisting of location, nature of products offered, nature of services offered and timing of provider registration at said website (see columns 3-4).

As per claim 8, Scroggie et al teach:

A method of issuing electronically generated merchant-specific discount coupons to consumers over an Internet communications link; the method comprising the steps of:

establishing an Internet website on said link, said website having a selected address (see column 4, lines 20-30);

providing at least one website page for merchants to register and to set their respective discount parameters for said discount coupons (see column 4, lines 1-6);

providing at least one website page for consumers to register and search for registered merchants based upon selected search criteria (see column 3);

providing at least one website page for consumers to indicate their desired purchase parameters (see column 3);

comparing discount parameters of a merchant with purchase parameters of a consumer and indicating when a match of discounts parameters and purchase parameters occurs (see columns 3-4);

presenting a website page having an electronic discount coupon representing the matching parameters for a particular merchant; and permitting a consumer to print the presented page for subsequent redemption of the discount coupon represented at said presented website page (see figure 11).

Claims 11-14 contain the same limitation as claims 4-7 therefore the same rejection is applied.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scroggie et al (U.S. 6,014,634) in view of the article Coupon-Clippers get Organized (dated March 10, 1991).

As per claims 2 and 9, Scroggie et al fail to teach:

The method recited in claim 1 wherein said matching parameters comprise an amount to be spent by the customer and a specified period of time in which said amount must be spent. However, the article Coupon-Clippers get Organized teaches the searching of coupon data such as amount, kind, and expiration date after the data is entered into a database (see paragraph 3). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the application was made, to know that after Scroggie et al have entered the provider's coupon offers into a database, if a customer would like to find coupons that apply to purchases over certain amounts, the system would search the database and would find and print the matching coupons. It is old and well known in the computer art that data is searched in a database by certain defined fields.

Claims 3 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scroggie et al (U.S. 6,014,634) in view of the article YahooAddsMaps of 50 Cities (dated April 25, 1996).

As per claims 3 and 10, Scroggie et al fail to teach:

The method recited in claim 1 wherein said presenting step further comprises the steps of generating a map indicating the location of a selected provider and adding said map to said website display. However, the article YahooAddsMaps of 50 Cities teaches that any website which contains location content can easily add mapping features and services (see paragraph 3). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the application was made, to know that Scroggie would include mapping capability to guide customers to the stores where they would redeem the coupons.

Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

Golden et al teach a data processing system that issues electronic certificates through online networks of personal computers, televisions, or other devices with video monitors or telephones.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DANIEL LASTRA whose telephone number is 703-306-5933. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30-3:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, ERIC W STAMBER can be reached on 703-305-8469. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-746-7239 for regular communications and 703-746-7238 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.

D.L.

Daniel Lastra

March 18, 2002



ERIC W. STAMBER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100